Agreement with the Bharti Telenet Ltd

4144. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Department of Telecommunications has signed the licence and interconnect agreement with the Bharti Telenet Ltd. for providing basic telephone services; and

(b) if so, the details of the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) M/S Bharti Telenet Ltd. has been given Licence to provide Basic Telephone Service in Madhya Pradesh Circle on non-exclusive basis for a period of 15 years. The main features of agreements are that during the licensed period, the company shall be paying a total of Rs. 654.50 crores as levy amount and 2% of the annual gross profit towards the administrative charges and R & D Cess. The company shall also pay Interconnection charges for the links to DOT network and Access charges for STD and ISD calls. Further the tariff for the service provided shall not be more than DOT's Tariff and is subject to regulation by TRAI.

In first three years of operation, the company shall provide 1.5 lakh telephone lines including 16,500 Village Public Telephones.

Improvement of Guwahati Airport

4145. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA :
SHRI DWARAKA NATH DAS :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the programmes initiated for imoprovement of Guwahati Airport;

(b) the reasons for delay in implementing the project and the target period fixed for its completion;

(c) the additional steps initiated to develop it as an International Airport as declared by the Prime Minister; and

(d) the steps taken for Cargo Depot at Guwahati Airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (c) During the 9th Plan period, there are plans to upgrade Guwahati airport for limited international operations. Some of the major works taken/ to be taken up are :

- Modification of the terminal building at a cost of Rs. 17.15 crores to be completed by December, 1997.
- Extension of runway from 9000 ft. to 11500 ft. for operation of Boeing 747 type of aircraft; land is being acquired for this purpose.
- Extension of apron at a cost of Rs. 2.41 crores to be completed by June, 1997.

(d) There are plans to construct a new Cargo complex at Guwahati airport. For this purpose also, land has to be acquired.

[Translation]

Reservation Charts

4146. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA :
SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to affix the reservation charts in the trains at railway yard instead of platform so that passengers do not face any problem in finding their names on arrival of trains at platforms;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which this proposal is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) While issuing tickets to passengers provided with confirmed reservation for travelling in sleeper class, AC 2-tier, Chair Car Class, Coach number and berth/seat numbers are indicated on the ticket itself so that they do not face any inconvenience. Moreover, the reservation charts are displayed on the Chart Boards at the Platform well in time before the scheduled departure of the train. These are also pasted on the train immediately after placement of rake on the Platform. These arrangements are working satisfactorily.

[English]

Absorption of Steam Locoshed Workers

4147. SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have initiated steps to absorb the erstwhile workers of Steam Locosheds at different places in the country now rendered unemployed after phasing out of Steam Locomotives;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) No railway staff, rendered surplus due to closure of steam sheds, has been retrenched. All such railway staff are being redeployed after suitable training. However, the issue regarding absorption of the Labours, engaged by the private contractors for doing coal/ash handling work in steam loco sheds is under consideration of this Ministry, persuant to reply to a Starred Question No. 362, repiied on 27.08.1996 in Lok Sabha, wherein